

MULTICASTING DATA

ABSTRACT

Multicasting data includes multicasting data to at least one line card attached to a router and storing state information associated with the data as a default state at each line card the data was multicast to. Multicast data having an unknown source and/or an unknown group need not be forwarded to the control path; the data path can be relied upon. A multicast packet included in the data can be forwarded up and evaluated to determine the packet's multicast source and/or group. After the state(s) are determined, the forwarding decision for the known states can be changed to "no more forwarding" for line cards that need not receive data destined for the multicast group, e.g., ports not leading to members of the multicast group.

20088086.doc